

### Congressman Stevenson's Defense of South Carolina's Claim of Jackson's Birthplace

(Editors Note:—The speech of Mr. Stevenson in the house of representatives on February 23, giving documentary evidence establishing beyond question that "Old Hickory" first saw the light in Lancaster county, South Carolina, makes about fifteen columns of newspaper type and will be printed in installments of about five columns in each issue.)

#### PART II.

Again on December 10, 1832, he issued his nullification proclamation, in which he says:

Fellow citizens of my native state, let me not only admonish you, as the First Magistrate of our common country, not to incur the penalty of its laws, but use the influence that a father would over his children whom he saw rushing to certain ruin. (See vol. 5, p. 85, Great American Debates.)

On January 24, 1833, he wrote again to Poinsett, as follows:

I repeat again, my pride and desire that the Union men may arouse and sustain the majesty of the Constitution and the laws, and save my native state from that disgrace that the Nullifiers have brought upon her. (Stille's Life of Poinsett, p. 68.)

If there ever was a time when Jackson would have repudiated his nativity in South Carolina, it was then, when he was being baited and defamed and abused, when he was being called everything on earth by the people who were attempting to nullify the laws of the National government. If there ever was a time when the leaders of South Carolina would have been glad to wipe him off their slate and repudiate him as a native-born citizen of South Carolina, they would have done it then, when he threw in their faces that he was a native, and that he proposed to vindicate the rights of the National government in his native state. (Applause.)

It went on then until he had gone through his stormy career, and in the shades of the Hermitage he received a copy of a resolution from the South Carolina legislature, sent by Gov. Hammond, in which they asked that congress take action to rescind the action and to refund the fines imposed upon him for contempt of Judge Hall's court in New Orleans, when he put Judge Hall in jail for a little while. Here is his answer to that:

Conscious as I am of the integrity and propriety of my conduct in regard to Judge Hall, it is truly grateful to my feelings to find the legislature of my native state, South Carolina, uniting with the legislature of other states in those high and honorable feelings of justice which their resolutions so plainly indicate.

That is the last deliverance by letter, and it is in the hands of the descendant of Gov. Hammond, Mr. E. Spann Hammond, at Blackville, S. C., and was published in the Sunday News, Charleston, August 7, 1894; and I cite you where you can see the originals of every one of these declarations. He then came down to the time when death was laying its hand upon him, and he sat down to make his will. Let us see what he said. He was patriotic to the bone. There is not a clause in his will that does not conduce to the conservation of the Union which was his heart's love and desire. He gave away several swords, and with each gift enjoined the donee that it only be drawn in honorable defense of his government, the government of the United States, and the Union, as constituted by the Constitution. His will is a remarkable document. If you will look at it. He then came down to the last and said:

The gold box presented to be by the corporation of the City of New York, the large silver vase presented to me by the ladies of Charleston, S. C., my native state, with the large picture representing the unfurling of the American banner, presented to me by the citizens of South Carolina when it was refused to be accepted by the United States senate. I leave in trust to my son, A. Jackson, Jr., with directions that, should our happy country not be blessed with peace, and even not always to be expected, he will at the close of the war or end of the conflict present each of said articles, of inestimable value, to that patriot residing in the city or state from which they were presented who shall be adjudged by his countrymen or the ladies to have been the most valient in defense of his country and our country's rights.

I pause here to turn aside from my manuscript just a moment to tell you something interesting regarding that bequest. The Mexican War within two years was upon us. The Palmetto Regiment of South Caro-

lina entered the City of Mexico first and planted the banner of America upon the Castle of Chapultepec. When they came back the executor turned over to the governor of South Carolina these two emblems—a vase he called it, while as a matter of fact it is a \$12,000 silver punch bowl, and we are keeping it very closely guarded now, because we do not want the Volstead folks to get it. (Laughter.) The governor called together the Palmetto Regiment and made a request of them that they determine who was the bravest man. They spent one day in endeavoring to settle that question, I am informed. Necessarily, it was a rather difficult and delicate question to settle. They came back to the governor and asked him to have the legislature provide that they should hold these emblems in trust for all of them until the last one was dead and then give them to him. The state held them until General Sherman came down through Columbia, and his folks got the banner, but the punch bowl was so well hidden that we have it yet. It came back into the hands of the governor after the war, when it was dug up out of the sand hills of Richland county; and two or three years ago, when there were only three or four of these old veterans of the Palmetto Regiment tottering on the border of the grave, I understand they made an absolute assignment to South Carolina of all their interest in it and asked that it be held as an emblem for South Carolina of the man who threatened to spank South Carolina if she went out of the Union in 1831. That is the history of that, and you will find that vase in the historical room in Columbia, S. C., today.

Just one moment now as to the contemporaneous declaration. In the first place, up to 1815, when, as I said, the line was settled, this line was always designated on the maps as being the road from Lancaster, S. C., to Charlotte, N. C. And you will see it is designated there so as to show it. The convention of 1851 settled that question between the two states, and every map after that was run straight. The county of Lancaster and the state of South Carolina employed James Boykin, one of the great civil engineers of that time, whose work has been verified start to finish, to make a map of the county of Lancaster. That was 53 years after Jackson's birth. There were hundreds of men in that country who were 20 years old when Jackson was born. He made the survey. He put on that map the battlefield of Buford's Brigade, which was cut to pieces, and congress has recognized that by putting a little monument there right on the spot where Boykin laid it out.

The Chairman. The time of the gentleman from South Carolina has expired.

Mr. Stevenson. May I have 10 minutes more?

Mr. Griffin. Mr. Chairman, I yield five minutes to the gentleman.

Mr. Shreve. If the gentleman will answer a question or two by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Dunbar), he will surrender five minutes of his time to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. Stevenson. I shall be very glad to answer any questions.

Mr. Dunbar. The gentleman is proving or trying to prove that Andrew Jackson states he was born in South Carolina. Everybody knows and everybody concedes that he thinks he was born in South Carolina. I would be very much interested in having the gentleman prove to us that the statements which have been made that he was born in North Carolina are not well founded.

I wish the gentleman would tell us why it is that the American Encyclopedia, the International Encyclopedia, the Encyclopedia Britannica, and all the encyclopedias which have been published and which give a reference to the birth of Andrew Jackson, there is but one of them that states that he was born in South Carolina, and that is the International. The International Encyclopedia stated—folk lore states—that he was born in North Carolina and Gen. Jackson himself states that he was born in South Carolina. It is the only encyclopedia which states that he was born in South Carolina. Why is it that the other—

Mr. Stevenson. If the gentleman is going to take up all of my five minutes, I have not got anywhere. (Laughter.)

Mr. Dunbar. I will conclude. In the face of this evidence how can the gentleman accept the statement of Andrew Jackson, which we all know was only founded upon infor-

mation, and it was in contradiction of the testimony of his relatives?

Mr. Stevenson. Yes; now we will come to that question. The gentleman interrupted me before I got to it. Let us find out who had the best opportunity of seeing the real witnesses who knew when and where he was born. But I will insert in the record the statement of who these people were who in 1858 gave Mr. Parton the affidavits on which he has based his history and from which all of these encyclopedias have taken their statements.

I say Andrew Jackson and his contemporaries saw and knew intimately the living witnesses, and the question was up and inquired into and settled in 1851, and all historians and citizens accepted the truth as settled then, and it was never challenged until 1858. Now, I cite the circumstances and other evidence.

It will be seen by Mouzon's maps, 1775, and also 1794, and Reed's maps, 1775, and Strother's map, 1808, that the road from Lancaster to Charleston was recognized as the line by the geographers up to 1808, but in 1813, as above stated, that line was settled and every map of North and South Carolina from that time forward sets it out as a straight line and puts the road in South Carolina and all of the Crawford land in South Carolina. In 1820 the first official map of South Carolina after that settlement was made by Boykin, and I hereto append a photostatic copy of the map of Lancaster county, which was subsequently put in Mills's Atlas of South Carolina, which is on file in the Congressional Library. That map was made in 1820 and was verified and improved for Mills's Atlas in 1825. And right beside the road from Lancaster to Charlotte and on land which in the old maps was partly in North Carolina, this entry is made "Gen. Andrew Jackson's birthplace." This is the statement of the civil engineer whose work has never been successfully assailed as to any of his historical references. For instance, on the same map you have the location of the battle ground where Buford's brigade was destroyed, which is now marked by a monument erected by act of congress, which verifies the location by Boykin. Here also properly noted is the battle ground of Hanging Rock, the first battle in which Andrew Jackson was under fire; he was there under Gen. William R. Davie, and that monument is accordingly located. He ran this when all the men who were a few years Jackson's senior were alive. Jackson was 53 years old and then a very noted general when this map was made. And nobody can escape the conclusion that the tradition was thoroughly settled at that time and this map was made with all the evidence before him, and it was an acute issue up to that time—Reilly's map made about the same time has the same entry—it is in state historical department of South Carolina. Another declaration of contemporaneous history was that of Gen. William R. Davie, who was born in England June 20, 1756, and after 1760 was raised in the Waxhaw settlement and belonged to Waxhaw church, which was established by his uncle, William Richardson, Presbyterian preacher, who left him all his fortune, and knew intimately the traditions of the country, who in 1815 made the statement unequivocally that Jackson was born in Lancaster district, S. C. The letter is still extant. Davie was afterwards governor of North Carolina, elected in 1798 and a county bears his name. In 1820 James Thonaldson, of Philadelphia, presented to the legislative library of South Carolina a bust of Jackson, for the reason that South Carolina was the native state of the distinguished general, and the South

Carolina legislature in resolution accepted it, as will be seen by reference to the report of the historical commission with congratulations that the nativity of Jackson is now acknowledged as our own. Referring to the line settlement of 1815. Why no protest from North Carolina?

The dispute was supposed to be settled when they settled that line, because the only dispute then was whether Crawford's land was in North or South Carolina. There was no dispute about his being born on Crawford's land, everybody admitted that, and as late as 1846 Foote in his sketches of North Carolina, upon page 476, says:

The place in which Andrew Jackson passed his early years was claimed by North Carolina for a long time, but is within the bounds of South Carolina, as now settled by the mutual agreement of the states.

It was done in 1815. Foote states this again on page 198. That was the only question until Mr. Parton moved the place of birth from Crawford's to McKemey's by the testimony of some good old ladies who had been dead 50 years. One circumstance which is pregnant is the failure of North Carolina historians to claim him. Wheeler's history of North Carolina was written in 1845 to 1850 and published in 1851, and enumerates the men who have originated in the different counties. Under Mecklenburg county, pages 263 to 268, he names eight very prominent citizens who originated in that county, and amongst them he names James Knox Polk, native of Mecklenburg, and afterwards president of the United States, and gives quite a lengthy history of him, but makes no claim that Andrew Jackson was a native of Mecklenburg county, and when the brethren of Mecklenburg county fail to claim a man for 75 years—85, in fact—it is pregnant evidence that they have no claim upon him. Under Union county, which had just been established, no such claim is made either.

What do the historians say? Mills's History of South Carolina, published in 1826, page 600, speaking of Lancaster county, says: Lancaster was the birthplace of Andrew Jackson. He was born near the waters of Waxhaw creek in this district and within a mile of the North Carolina line.

The accuracy of this historian has never been successfully assailed in any particular. Amos Kendall wrote practically an autobiography of Jackson, because he wrote it under Jackson's immediate supervision and the first number contains a map identical with the maps set out here, with the place of Jackson's birth shown as the Crawford place, in Lancaster county, S. C., which is claimed under the authority of Gen. Jackson.

On June 27, 1845, George Bancroft, the greatest historian yet produced by America, said in his memorial address on Jackson:

South Carolina gave a birthplace to Andrew Jackson. On its remote frontier, far up on the forest-clad banks of the Catawba, in a region where settlers were just beginning to cluster, his eye first saw the light. (Bancroft, Miscellaneous Writings, p. 445.)

This memorial address was published in the leading papers of the country, and coming, as it did, from the leading historian of the country, no protest or counterstatement was issued by North Carolina, and the correctness of the statement was conceded till 1859, when Gen. Walker and Mr. Parton promulgated the new history.

"Gadsden's Life of Jackson," published in 1824, states unequivocally that he was a native of South Carolina. No history prior to Parton's 1859, ever asserted the contrary.

As I have already said, Wheeler's History of North Carolina does not claim him for Mecklenburg county as it does James K. Polk—and properly—and Foote's History of North Carolina states expressly twice that there was a dispute as to the place where he was brought up, but it had been settled that it was in South Carolina. Bradley's History of Jackson, published in 1902, and again in 1906, makes the statement in the text, which is the 1902 text that Jackson was born at the McKemey house in North Carolina. This is his statement:

When Andrew Jackson, Sr., died he left his wife with two little boys and practically no property. He had not proved up his claim, and there is no evidence in the records of land transfers that he ever owned a foot of ground.

Then he speaks of Mrs. Jackson starting to her brother-in-law's, Mr. Crawford's:

On the way she stopped over night at the McKemey house, and there Andrew, Jr., was born; she was well enough to travel in three weeks, a rather long convalescence for a fron-

tier woman of that period; leaving Hugh in the McKemey home, she journeyed to the Crawford place with Robert and the infant, Andrew.

After publishing his 1902 edition, and possibly his first edition of the 1906 book, he took up with Mr. A. S. Salley, secretary of the Historical Commission of South Carolina, and had him prepare a complete statement of the evidence in the matter, which will be found as Appendix A to the 1906 edition, and in bringing out the book he repudiates the text as to that matter, and Appendix A begins with this note:

The most interesting and valuable paper which seems to settle the question has been specially prepared for this book by Mr. A. S. Salley, Jr., secretary of the Historical Commission of South Carolina, an author of numerous historical and genealogical papers relating to southern subjects.

That is on page 407 of the appendix. On page 421 he makes this statement:

While I agree with Mr. Salley as to Jackson's birthplace, and to that extent disagree with Parton, I am compelled to make an emphatic dissent from his estimate of Parton's book as a whole.

So that Brady, when confronted with evidence which Salley produced, repudiated the tradition found in Parton on which all the biographical dictionaries have based their statement as to Jackson's birthplace. The latest history is that of J. Spenser Bassett, now professor of history in Smith College, formerly a professor of history at Trinity College, North Carolina, at which institution I am informed he was educated; and on pages 6 and 7 of volume 1 you will find a discussion of the question with his conclusions, and I cite them: (Published 1911.)

To the writer the weight of evidence seems to favor the South Carolinians. The Leslie tradition rests on an old woman's account of an event which happened when she was a child of 7, an event, too, about which a child could not be well informed. It was weakly corroborated by a statement of Thomas Faulkner, aged 70; by another man, also a Leslie descendant, who relied on information which he said he had from Sarah Lathan's mother 50 years earlier; and by James D. Craig's statement that he had heard—evidently much earlier than his statement—"a very aged lady," Mrs. Cousar, says that she assisted at the birth at McKemey's house. The weakness of this evidence lies in the long time which elapsed between the event and the time of its recording. All of it must have been carried many years in the minds of two people, one passing it on when she was very old to another, who told it when he was very old. And to

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It is the enthusiasm which the narrators had for their story and the lack of critical examination of it when it came from their lips, place against it the clear statement of Jackson made in response to a question which this controversy aroused that he was born in the house of James Crawford, in South Carolina, and to most men the story will probably appear doubtful. Somewhat more trustworthy is the explicit statement of Gen. Jackson.

There were numerous histories of Jackson written during his life, all of which assume that he was born in South Carolina, and his will is found in full in Frost's History, pages 500 to 502.

(PART III IN NEXT ISSUE.)

Paper From Bark.

Government scientists in India have succeeded in making paper from three new materials—leaves of a West Australian plant, timber from East Africa, and a bark of a tree found in Rhodesia.

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